Train Derailments

418. SHRI IQBAL SINGH: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) what is the percentage of derailments out of the total train accidents during the last two years;

(b) what is the average number of derailments per month during 1995-96;

(c) what are the reasons for derailments; and

(d) the steps taken by Government to reduce derailments?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SURESH KALMADI): (a) Seventy seven per cent.

(b) On an average, there were 23 derailments per month during the first ten months of 1995-96.

(c) Main reasons are human and equipment failures, sabotage and incidental factors, etc.

(d) Steps taken to prevent derailments include:—

(i) Improvement in track structure by using heavier rails and concrete sleepers.

(ii) For improving maintenance and better asset reliability, fish-plated joints are being eliminated and running track is laid on long welded rail panels.

(iii) Accelerating track renewals and liquidation of ballast deficiencies in various sections.

(iv) Detection of hidden flaws in rails by use of ultrasonic flaw detectors.

(v) Upgradation and augmentation of infrastructure for Routine Overhaul (ROH) of rolling stock and standardisation of maintenance facilities for coaching and wagons.

(vi) Launching of frequent safety drives. Nearly 17,000 drivers with less than ten years' active driving service and 40,000 station staff have been subjected to special screening and those who have been found deficient have been given crash training.

(vii) Intensification of patrolling in sensitive and vulnerable sections.

Fake Educational Institutions

419. DR. BAPU KALDATE: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) the number of fake educational institutions in various parts of the country and the nature of education imparted by these institutions;

(b) the percentage of rise of such institutions during 1995; and

(c) the action taken by the Government to deal with such institutions in the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION & DEPARTMENT OF CULTURE (KUMARI SELJA): (a) According to the information furnished by the University Grants Commission (UGC), the number of institutions styling themselves as universities is 20 but Association of Indian Universities (AIU) have informed that there are 36 self-styled universities. There are 20 universities common to both the lists. They award 'degrees' in violation of UGC Act, 1956 in general education i.e. B.A., B.Com., B.Ed., M.A. etc.

(b) No addition of fake universities has come to the notice of either UGC or AIU during 1995.

(c) The UGC has been requesting the State Governments to make enquiries regarding the existence/functioning of fake universities and take legal action